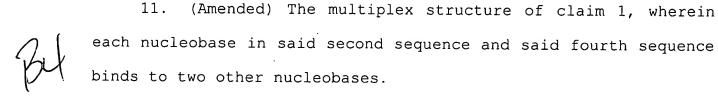
to: (a) the binding between opposing bases of the first and second strands; (b) the binding between opposing bases of the third and fourth strands; and (c) the binding between opposing bases of the second and fourth strands. See Fig. 6. --

## IN THE CLAIMS:

## Please amend claims 1 and 11 as follows:

- 1. (Amended) A multiplex structure comprising:
- a first strand containing a first sequence of nucleobases;
- a second strand containing a second sequence of nucleobases, wherein said second strand is associated with said first strand by Watson-Crick bonding;
- a third strand containing a third sequence of nucleobases; and
- a fourth strand containing a fourth sequence of nucleobases, wherein said fourth strand is associated with said second strand and said third strand by Watson-Crick bonding, and wherein at least one nucleobase of said fourth sequence of nucleobases is associated by Watson-Crick bonding to least one nucleobase of said third sequence of nucleobases and to at least one nucleobase of said second sequence of nucleobases.



11.